CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 15 February 1990, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Hendrik Wagenmakers (Netherlands)

GE.90-60174/1576B

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 535th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

In conformity with its programme of work, the Conference will continue to listen to plenary statements, as well as to deal with a number of organizational questions. However, in accordance with rule 30 of its rules of procedure, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

I wish to inform the Conference that consultations on a mandate for the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons are continuing. The wish has been conveyed to me that we might hold an informal meeting after the list of speakers is exhausted to take stock of the situation. If there is no objection, we shall proceed accordingly.

I have on my list of speakers today the representatives of Peru and the Federal Republic of Germany. I now give the floor to the representative of Peru, Ambassador de Rivero.

Mr. de RIVERO (Peru) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, I would like to convey to you my country's warmest congratulations on your taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament on behalf of the Netherlands. I wish you every success in the performance of your important and delicate duties, and I offer you the constant co-operation of my delegation in order that you may attain this objective. We are sure that your recognized professional skills augur well for the progress towards our goals.

I should also like to thank Ambassador El Ghali Benhima of Morocco for having so ably conducted the delicate final part of the work of our Conference in the month of September and the inter-sessional period. Allow me also to thank Under-Secretary-General Yasushi Akashi and our Secretary-General Ambassador Komatina and Ambassador Berasategui and all the members of the secretariat for the constant support we receive.

As the Conference on Disarmament begins its session I would like to join in the tribute paid to Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles, the architect of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and an example of a diplomat with a mission. He is leaving us after more than 25 years of dedication to the cause of disarmament. I would like the delegation of Mexico to convey to Ambassador Garcia Robles the fact that we are not going to forget him and that his efforts will be continued, because he is leaving behind him friends and admirers and a path outlined to continue building peace.

I would like to wish a very warm welcome and offer my co-operation to the new colleagues that are joining our disarmament family this year: Ambassadors Garcia Moritán of Argentina, Shannon of Canada, Hou Zhitong of China, Pérez Novoa of Cuba, Ledogar of the United States, Negrotto Cambiaso of Italy, Donowaki of Japan, Ogada of Kenya, Marín Bosch of Mexico, Rasaputram of Sri Lanka and Arteaga of Venezuela, and last but not least, to extend to you, Sir, the warmest welcome and my offer of support. I cannot conclude my opening remarks without expressing gratitude for the significant messages

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addressed to us by Presidents Carlos Salinas de Gortari of Mexico and Carlos Saúl Menem of Venezuela, and also the presence in this room of the Foreign Ministers of the Netherlands, Mr. Hans van den Broeke, and Austria, Alois Mock. All this enhances the commencement of our work at this Conference.

According to an old proverb, which I suspect is Chinese, like all ancient proverbs, there is no worse curse or greater blessing for a man than to live in interesting times. I do indeed believe that in our case we are beginning to experience a kind of blessing with the end of the cold war, the start of a large-scale movement for the removal of ideology from international relations and the presence of a kind of stampede throughout the world for civil and political freedoms and democracy, the beginnings of a victory over apartheid and the beginning of a new strategic concept of common international security. 1989 is a year that will be remembered. When later on it is studied by scholars, they may refer to the phenomenon of the revolution of '89. Dialogue, co-operation and possible agreements on additional disarmament measures in the field of strategic weapons and the limitation of nuclear testing and the recent agreement for cuts in troops in Europe and chemical weapon stocks between the United States and the Soviet Union and the negotiations on conventional weapons between NATO and the Warsaw Pact mark the end of the cold war.

These are interesting times that are traced in the news on our television screens and in the press, that make us optimistic and - why not say it? - leave us bewildered. So much so that sometimes we are left behind by events. Not even specialists in international relations, or professional politicians, or very often we diplomats, have immediate answers to this historical acceleration without precedent at the end of this century. Perhaps this is the product of almost 45 years without a wholesale war and the unprecedented growth of science and technology.

As the Conference on Disarmament begins in this context of historical acceleration that I have described, I think it is appropriate to pause and reflect before we embark on the usual rituals of our work. The questions we should reflect on are the following: Is the Conference on Disarmament ready to deal with this process of historical acceleration? Will the Conference be capable of playing a part in the change? Or will we, on the contrary, steeped in an attitude of bewilderment and tied to old rituals and reflexes, stand apart from these events? If we become involved, these interesting times that we are describing will, in accordance with the proverb I quoted, be a blessing. But if we do not, then these times can turn into a curse for the Conference, by leaving us aside.

On the basis of these premises, I hope subsequently to set out some concrete thoughts which are not intended as proposals but as somewhat provocative ideas that I think we should voice in view of the dynamic of the present international situation.

The first point concerns the agenda of our Conference on Disarmament. This agenda is a legacy of the cold war. Some of the items are too abstract - sometimes metaphysical. They were included possibly with a link to the East-West confrontation when there was no possibility of breaking the

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deadlock in the negotiations and making headway on specific and concrete situations. Perhaps, along this line of thinking, one of our first thoughts should concern whether it is necessary to bring the items on our agenda in a more concrete and specific way into line with the movement in international negotiations and events that are occurring outside this room. Perhaps it might be necessary to exchange views in a very informal way on whether it would be interesting, for example, to hold informal meetings in the Conference, without records, for the purpose of a kind of brainstorming exercise on the revision of the agenda. For instance, through this informal dialogue, which would be direct and frank, would it not be interesting to see whether there is real scope for revitalizing some items or bringing in specific and important new items?

For instance, concerning this present item on "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", which continues to be the object of a degree of ritual repetition, could it not be revitalized and given a more operational approach, making it possible to set up under this item a kind of procedural link and communication in which, by means of informal plenary meetings without records, the United States and Soviet negotiators on strategic weapons could give us periodic information on progress in their negotiations? And then, perhaps, in formal meetings, under this item, we could be given direct and relevant information from Ministers Baker or Shevardnadze, which I believe, would greatly enhance our work.

Another item on our agenda that could be revitalized in order to bring our Conference into the mainstream of international trends is, I believe, to reach agreement amongst ourselves once and for all on a mandate to establish the ad hoc committee on the cessation of nuclear tests. Whether or not an ad hoc committee is set up on this major issue could be a significant indication that the Conference is not keeping abreast of international political trends that are occurring around it.

In this connection we will support all the efforts that Ambassador Donowaki of Japan is making in order to arrive at a mandate and establish this ad hoc committee at last. At present the United States/Soviet bilateral negotiations are proceeding on limiting the number and yield of tests. It is possible that protocols on this subject may be signed at the forthcoming June summit to be held in Washington between Presidents Bush and Gorbachev. Moreover, the fourth NPT review conference, which is very closely connected with progress made in limiting and halting nuclear tests, is to begin next August. As we can see, there are a series of bilateral and multilateral negotiations that link up with our Conference through the limitation and cessation of nuclear testing. How, then, can we fail to set up the ad hoc committee? Not to do so would offer the clearest proof that the work of the Conference was out of touch with the realities of international life. This is an issue which has as much priority as that of chemical weapons. To reactivate it is to give the work of the Conference political symmetry; I say political symmetry because the Conference is now focusing the bulk of its work on chemical disarmament, to such an extent that it has been said here that the Conference is in fact becoming a preparatory committee for the chemical weapons convention. This does not in any way mean that we should ease up on the work of the Ad hoc Committee on chemical weapons. Quite the

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contrary: this thought is designed to bring some symmetry to the approach and strategy of our work. At the same time as we are revitalizing other priority issues, we should make an effort so that within a year at most we can come up with the text of a convention on the total prohibition of chemical weapons.

But, thinking aloud again, if we do not manage to do this, if we do not manage to produce this convention text after excessively focusing our work on chemical weapons, the Conference will be faced with a doubly difficult situation, having succeeded neither in finalizing a convention on chemical weapons nor in revitalizing and making headway in other important aspects of disarmament. How could we face the international community and justify these two consecutive years of concentration on chemical weapons without any results? Let us move ahead on chemical weapons, but let us also tackle other fronts. And here I wish to thank and congratulate Ambassador Morel of France for the way in which he chaired the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. Ambassador Morel has summed up the present status of the negotiations on chemical weapons with a strategic metaphor and a felicitous expression. In his strategic metaphor he says that "the front has moved" and that if the momentum is maintained we can finalize the convention within a year. His felicitous expression tells us that we are "firmly committed". I think that he is right in both aspects, and that the situation being handed on to us by Ambassador Morel, if we can make full use of it, is promising. I certainly believe that my dear colleague Ambassador Hyltenius, to whom we offer our full co-operation, will have a major responsibility to make sure that the front not only moves, but is broken, and that our full commitment leads to our goal.

In order to do this, it seems to me that we must pursue intensive work on the structural and basic aspects of the convention and not get entangled in a great deal of detail, precision and technicalities. Some sort of choice must be made with the elements we have before us, in order to construct the convention as rapidly as possible. Let us not strive to build it in baroque style. Let us make some sort of choice in order to separate what is important from what is secondary and produce an acceptable convention within a year.

Another subject on which I would like to express some thoughts aloud is that of how we should continue continue to deal with the subject of radiological weapons. It is my experience, as a former Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee, that the main problem is epistemological, that is to say, a problem of knowledge. These weapons are a kind of entelechy, which is a metaphysical category used by Greek thinkers to define what has no definite essence or substance. We do not know whether they exist and, if they do, what they are like. Year after year we discuss these entelechies. I am led by my perhaps somewhat provocative thoughts to ask whether it would not be better to concentrate on making progress with something practical and concrete which would help to confront this Conference with the real security needs of this present moment in history, for example by making progress with concrete negotiations to bring about a convention to ban attacks on nuclear facilities, or, as was suggested by Minister van den Broeke of the Netherlands, by beginning examination of the proliferation of ballistic missiles and their technology that can be equipped with weapons of mass destruction.

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I have ventured to set forth these thoughts because I think that during interesting times such as those we are living in now it is always necessary to have doubts, since doubt is the basis of all rational, creative, antidogmatic and antiroutine processes. I am not proposing anything. I merely wish to sow this uneasiness among us. Let us consider together how to initiate a creative movement to become involved in the "interesting times" in which we find ourselves and which, in this case, according to the proverb, can so far be a blessing for the Conference on Disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Peru for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, Ambassador von Stülpnagel.

Mr. von STULPNAGEL (Federal Republic of Germany): The resumption of our efforts in the Conference on Disarmament takes place at a juncture of unprecedented change. I agree with Ambassador de Rivero that we in the CD are facing both a challenge and an opportunity to capitalize on present conditions in order to make substantial progress and to contribute to increased mutual security.

The dynamic political changes in Europe during the last few months have fundamentally improved the prospects for the establishment of a new pattern of relations between the countries of the old continent together with those of the new world. Ideological and military antagonism may effectively be replaced with co-operation, trust and peaceful competition, and human rights and political freedom may be fully guaranteed and enjoyed by all individuals, bringing us closer to the vision of a just, humane and democratic world.

In Europe we are undoubtedly facing an immediate future that is promising but remains uncertain as long as the achievements are not translated and consolidated on a truly universal basis and in a context of stability.

Today the question of stability is no longer linked to the two major blocs. We are entering a phase where much more political subtlety and finesse is needed complementary to super-Power summitry. Continuous efforts must be made in arms control diplomacy and in the European context of the important CSCE process. To assist in giving this process a global scale, the Conference on Disarmament will have to consistently pursue every opportunity for effective contributions beyond its item-related efforts.

Therefore my intention today is different from that of other colleagues. It is not to follow the traditional course of examining the individual items of our agenda, or to assess their prospects for this year's session. I will instead concentrate on one item which conceptually combines the individual fields of our agenda in an effort to chart a more interrelated course for arms control and disarmament and to set a legitimate agenda for its future. I speak of the question of security concepts, military strategies and military doctrines.

It is a universal truth that a possible transformation of national and alliance concepts is considered a prerequisite for the establishment of a distinct road map towards more secure, stable and less antagonistic security

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structures, at considerably lower and legitimate levels of armaments and armed forces. It has taken decades before we can now officially deal with the question of military doctrines. This delay is in contradiction to the important role played by a combined effort to compare and evaluate conceptual differences in harmonizing arms control and disarmament objectives and defence planning requirements. Doctrines express political objectives, and as such they ultimately determine the extent to which forces may be reduced and the level of confidence-building measures which is desirable or acceptable.

Military strategies and doctrines are founded on assumptions derived from historical experience, national styles and predilections and geostrategic conditions. These are, in general, the driving forces behind the outlook of military establishments. These military establishments, either on a national or an alliance basis, receive their final shape and character often, and unfortunately, in a reaction of overinsurance against neighbouring forces and military options.

Due to this fact military concepts and doctrines have often become the catalysts for dynamism in arms and armed forces procurement, and finally for the arms race itself. This has been demonstrated often enough during the last 40 years in the action/reaction scheme of the varying East/West confrontation. Thus it is all the more encouraging to observe today that in the region with the highest concentration of weapons, and where confrontation between conflicting military doctrines has been inherent, serious attempts are being made to break this vicious circle.

It is of particular importance that this attempt is being made now, at this crucial time of transition, taking due account of the changing political and military situation in Europe as well as in other regions, inter alia by developing thinking on the future design of war prevention strategies and their adjustment to changing perceptions, convictions and background conditions. Thus the new approaches assist the transition considerably by adequately harmonizing arms control and defence planning on the one hand and helping arms control to fully exploit its potential as an agent of change on the other.

Four years ago in his plenary statement before the CDE in Stockholm, Federal Foreign Minister Genscher called for talks on military doctrines. His proposal derived from his conviction that talks on military concepts and strategies between representatives of the Warsaw Pact and NATO, as well as the neutral and non-aligned countries participating in the CSCE, could considerably help to overcome prejudices and could offer a chance and a challenge to crystallize new security policy thinking among all participants, thus contributing to removing unfounded perceptions of threats and enemy images and eliminating distrust and suspicion.

Some two and a half years after the declaration by the Warsaw Pact States on their common military doctrine, and about 10 months after the States of the Western Alliance tabled their proposal for the holding of a seminar on security concepts and military doctrines, these ideas have now been put into effect for the first time in post-war history. From 16 January to 5 February the participants in the negotiations on confidence- and security-building

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measures in Vienna - 17 of which are members of our Conference - held a seminar which saw for the first time the presence of the most prominent military representatives of the CSCE States.

This seminar was preceded by a trial seminar on military doctrines between the Federal Republic of Germany and Poland held in June 1989 near Munich. The substantive and procedural findings of this trial run made valid contributions to the initiation of presentation and discourse at the Vienna seminar.

Despite remaining differences the Vienna seminar witnessed an amazingly high degree of convergence and agreement. All delegations made efforts to ensure openness and dialogue. Their statements were imbued with seriousness of purpose and the realization of their special responsibility for a secure and stable Europe.

Noteworthy was the gratifying willingness of all to face critical questions, give frank answers and be ready to enter into a dialogue with the other side on threat perceptions. The concrete military intentions and planning of the participating States were described in detail, their rationale was scrutinized and questioned, and a comparison was made with the relevant facts. The participants experienced a factual dialogue on all questions of military policy, a dialogue with great openness.

Thus the seminar made an important contribution to disclosing the aims and intentions of military policies, correcting erroneous perceptions and making transparent which armed forces and dispositions are adequate for sufficient defence.

At the suggestion of the neutral and non-aligned delegations a discussion was initiated on criteria for defining defensiveness. Although the discussion was inconclusive, it nevertheless revealed a field to which increased attention should be devoted in the future in order to influence conceptual thinking for future disarmament negotiations. In this context important points of convergence and agreement which should become valid in all parts of the globe have emerged from the different contributions. They include: the principle that the prevention of war is the paramount consideration in all military strategies and security policies; the realization that only defensive security concepts and military doctrines are permissible today; the need for consistency between defensive concepts and doctrines, on the one hand, and the potentials kept in a state of preparedness, and operational principles adopted in practice, on the other; the need to ensure that the interrelationship between arms control issues and defence requirements, as well as the interrelationship between the various arms control areas, are fully taken into account; and finally the acknowledgement that concerns felt by other States on the basis of previous, old armed forces structures and operational principles had often been perfectly justified.

The open dialogue in which a number of States for the first time described and explained their national military doctrines in public, and thus demonstrated their willingness to submit them to analysis, confirmed that unilateral adjustments must precede co-operative endeavours to formalize

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changes in military force postures. Their irreversibility cannot be achieved as long as important differences between declaratory defence policies and actual operational capabilities persist.

Nevertheless, armed forces will remain an expression of power and represent a possible threat in the eyes of the opposite side, especially when a discrepancy becomes obvious between declarations of defensive military policy and armed forces that are in excess of legitimate security needs.

The defensive character of national or alliance forces does not result from a mere political declaration. A political declaratory affirmation of non-aggression and pledges of non-use alone offer no adequate assurance of security and stability. Defensive character must be underscored by the defence orientation of the concepts of military strategy. It must affect the operational, strategic and military - even technical - levels of the armed forces.

Unless defensive intentions are materially implemented, they will not have the necessary confidence-building and stabilizing effects which are required for the initiation of further substantive cuts in armaments and armed forces themselves. The defensive character of a strategy and military doctrine remains determined mainly by the size, deployment, structure, logistics and training of the armed forces. Thus, there must be no discrepancy between defence policy rhetoric on the one side and actual force structures and employment concepts on the other.

In this regard the discussion of security concepts and military doctrines has found an indisputable place in the process of confidence-building. This dialogue should be used to promote the system of co-operative security structures in Europe. An essential element of co-operative security is to ensure that armed forces have strictly defensive roles. This fundamental prerequisite for shaping a just, lasting and stable peaceful order is not restricted to Europe. In a world where global imbalances threaten to invalidate regional stability, and where regional imbalances tend to undermine global stability, this obligation fully applies to the field of global multilateral responsibility.

Much remains to be done to shape a common view on all relevant criteria for defensive orientation of armed forces and co-operative security structures, ensuring that wars and intimidation of any kind in all regions of the world are prevented and that military aggression becomes an option which no Government could rationally contemplate or hope successfully to undertake, and by so doing to lay the foundations for a world where military forces exist solely to preserve the independence and territorial integrity of their countries.

This is a multilateral obligation and task to which the CD can and must contribute. The task ahead has become more complex, but prospects for its solution have considerably improved. At the start of this year's session the Conference on Disarmament faces an unmatched opportunity to translate the climate of détente based on the current changes towards democracy and pluralism into specific agreements on the priority issues before it, thus promoting and safeguarding the transitions under way.

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These transitions from confrontation to agreed solutions that we are witnessing in Europe and in many other regions of the world make it incumbent on the CD to relegate its own contradictions so that consensual approaches can take centre stage. The resumption of comparative talks on security policies, military strategies and doctrines offers us considerable support. The Conference should make due use of their results and not miss the chance to adequately complement progress and success in the bilateral and regional negotiations, in particular by contributing to solutions and progress in the main items it is entrusted with.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany for his statement. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other member wish to take the floor? It seems not. As agreed earlier today, I shall now suspend this plenary meeting and convene, in a few minutes' time, an informal meeting of the Conference to review the ongoing consultations on a mandate for an ad hoc committee on chemical weapons.

The meeting was suspended at 11.05 a.m. and resumed at 12.15 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: The 535th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is resumed.

We shall now proceed, as announced earlier, to take a decision on working paper CD/WP.380, entitled "Draft decision on the re-establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons". This text is now being circulated. The text I am proposing today is the result of lengthy consultations, and I hope that it will meet with your approval. If there is no objection, I shall consider that the draft decision is adopted.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I shall now turn to the appointment of the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee. You will recall that, in its report to the Conference on the 1989 session, the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons recommended that Ambassador Carl-Magnus Hyltenius of Sweden should be appointed as its Chairman for the 1990 session. As the Committee has just been re-established, I intend now to formalize the recommendation whereby Ambassador Hyltenius will be appointed Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to extend my congratulations, as well as those of the Conference, to Ambassador Hyltenius on his appointment. I am convinced that his diplomatic ability, knowledge of the subject and negotiating skills will provide outstanding leadership for the Ad hoc Committee at a decisive stage in its work. I wish Ambassador Hyltenius every success in the heavy responsibilities facing him.

I recognize the distinguished representative of Mexico.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): The Group of 21 is very gratified at the decision we have just taken to appoint Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden to chair the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. Those of us who work alongside him in the Group of 21 know his skills and human qualities, and we are sure that at this important stage in the work of the Committee he will be able to bring the work entrusted to it to a succesful conclusion.

On behalf of the Group of 21 I should like to make the following statement following the re-establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

(continued in English)

On 6 February 1990 the Group of 21 made a statement with regard to the mandate of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. It set forth its position on elements that should be included in the mandate, that is, the time factor, the deletion of the restriction on final drafting and a reference to the prohibition of use.

The Group of 21 welcomes the inclusion of the first two elements in the mandate just adopted by the Conference. However, it is to the deep regret of the Group of 21 that the Conference has not been able to include a reference to the prohibition of use.

The Group of 21 has joined the consensus on the mandate in order to ensure the prompt resumption of the important work of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. We continue to believe that the present mandate does not specify in clear terms that the prohibition of use is covered. This element is of paramount importance to the Group, as well as to the vast majority of other members of the Conference.

Mr. SUJKA (Poland): Mr. President, my delegation will have the opportunity to welcome the new colleagues who have recently joined us in our work in the Conference on Disarmament. I would, therefore, like to limit myself to expressing my personal satisfaction to see you in the Chair. I keep in my memory very pleasant impressions of our close contacts and co-operation from the years you and I were for the first time assigned to this body. May I also wholeheartedly congratulate Ambassador Hyltenius on his appointment as the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons for this 1990 session, and offer him our full co-operation in his endeavours in fulfilling his very important job?

In my capacity as Item Co-ordinator, I should like on behalf of our Group to place on record the following statement on the re-establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. Our Group welcomes the re-establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons and expresses its hope and belief that under the new Chairman, the intensive pace of negotiations towards the early conclusion of the chemical weapons convention will be continued. Once again, I would like to congratulate Ambassador Morel for the competent and creative manner in which he steered the work of the Committee last session. We have just adopted a new mandate for the Ad hoc Committee; we are

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

particularly pleased to see in its new version the deletion of the phrase "except for its final drafting". In our Group's opinion, this is a significant improvement enabling us to enter the decisive stage of our negotiations on the comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons to meet the expectations of the world community for the final elaboration of the convention at the earliest date, as so clearly expressed in the Final Declaration of the Paris Conference, as well as during the Government-Industry Conference held in Canberra and in two unanimous resolutions of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

Our Group supported deeper changes in the mandate along the lines proposed by the Group of 21. We attach special importance to the inclusion of a reference to the prohibition of use of chemical weapons, to be consistent with the scope of the future convention and with the language used in General Assembly resolutions 44/115 A and B and in the Final Declaration of the Paris Conference. Nevertheless, the most important task ahead of us is to start effective work on the convention without delay. This is why we have joined the consensus in accepting the mandate in its present form, which is, in any case, a very good and important improvement. We would like to express our thanks to you, Mr. President, for your able efforts to bring us to this compromise. However, we do hope that the course of negotiations on the chemical weapons convention will bring us during this session to the moment when we will be able once again to address the question of further changes in the mandate.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Poland for his statement, and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. I now recognize the representative of the United States of America.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): I would like to join the other speakers in congratulating Ambassador Hyltenius on his being appointed to the post as Chairman of the CW Ad hoc Group. He and his very able delegation will have a big task ahead of them this year as our work on CW accelerates.

I would like to say a few words first about the reservation on the final drafting. In support of President Bush's initiatives on chemical weapons and his personal commitment to the early achievement of the chemical weapons convention, the United States has joined the consensus to accept the amendment to the Ad hoc Committee's mandate, dropping the phrase "except for final drafting". I must point out, however, that this amendment to drop the caveat will in no way change the United States' requirement for full debate of the remaining substantive issues. Thus, we wish to clarify that elimination of the caveat against final drafting does not mean that we have now entered the final stage of the CW negotiations. The United States believes that there is considerable work remaining before reaching this stage of final drafting. It is our understanding that final drafting would only start after the substantive issues in the negotiations have been resolved. Having said this, I would like to underscore the United States' readiness and the readiness of my delegation to help resolve those remaining issues.

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

On the issue of incorporating into the mandate the word "use", let me say the following. As we all know, the 1925 Geneva Protocol bans the use of chemical weapons, but many States, including many here around this table, entered into a reservation giving the reserving State the right to use chemical weapons in response to a chemical weapons attack against the reserving State or its allies. It is essential that the United States retain the right to retaliate in kind to chemical weapon attack on the United States or its forces as long as we possess chemical weapons. We thus need to preserve this security option during the transition to a régime banning all chemical weapons. Furthermore, it is the view of the United States that it is inappropriate to single out or emphasize only certain areas in the chemical weapons mandate. In our draft text the parties would also undertake not to acquire chemical weapons, not to retain chemical weapons, not to transfer them, not to assist, encourage or induce anyone else to engage in any of the prohibited activities, and we are not adding all of those other prohibitions to the mandate.

I have been asked why it is that two days ago I circulated here in this body the text of a communiqué entered into by the United States and the USSR, where the world "use" was specified. I think the lesson there is very clear. When we are talking about use as an objective of the convention, we certainly stand by the words that are in our own text and the modifications to it that have come forward, but when the word "use" is a stalking-horse for some other purpose, we will continue to resist its being singled out for special attention in that regard.

Mr. HOU (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. President, today we are very happy to see that under your able guidance and through serious and constructive consultations we have ironed out some of the differences on the issue of the mandate for the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, so that the Ad hoc Committee can be re-established and start its work as soon as possible. This is the hope that our delegation has always held. For this I would like to congratulate you and the plenary. Within this short period of 10 days our Conference on Disarmament has achieved one success after another and created excellent conditions for smooth running of the future substantive negotiations. We would like to thank you for your fruitful leadership. At the same time we would like to thank the Group of 21 as well as all the other groups for their co-operative spirit and the active contributions they have made.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the distinguished Ambassador of France, Mr. Morel, once again for his contribution during the 1989 session. I would like to express our appreciation for the excellent work accomplished by him and the chairmen of the five working groups. I warmly congratulate the distinguished Ambassador of Sweden, Mr. Hyltenius, who has been appointed as the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee. We believe that with his rich experience and diplomatic skill he will help the Ad hoc Committee to achieve new results. Our delegation will co-operate with you fully, Sir, as well as with the Ad hoc Committee.

(Mr. Hou, China)

We are very happy to see that some important improvements have been made in the new mandate. The phrase "except for its final drafting" has been deleted and the constructive formulation "at the earliest date", taken from the Final Declaration of the Paris Conference, has been incorporated. We have a positive evaluation of this achievement. At the same time we share the regret of the Group of 21 that we have not been able to achieve consensus on the inclusion of the important term "prohibition of use" in the mandate. I would like to say that the Chinese delegation has not changed its principled position that the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons should be included in the future comprehensive convention. Consensus on the inclusion of the prohibition of use in the convention was achieved in the early 1980s, and is already reflected in the "rolling text". We hope that this agreement will be embodied in the work of the new Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. We would like once again to express our hope that the constructive consultations and co-operative spirit among member States will enable the negotiations in the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons and in the Conference as a whole to achieve new progress.

Mr. REESE (Australia): The Western Group welcomes the re-establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons under a mandate which, we believe, will enable the negotiations to proceed at full pace. We note that some differences remain among delegations in regard to the mandate. These can always be further addressed in the life of the Ad hoc Committee.

We would like to congratulate Ambassador Hyltenius on his appointment as Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee. We know his qualities well, and see him as a most fitting successor to Ambassador Morel. I assure him that the Western Group looks forward to the closest co-operation with him in expediting the negotiations in this critical year as we move closer to the completion of a chemical weapons convention.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the statements just made on the mandate of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. I am sure that the points raised therein will be the subject of consultations amongst the delegations. I now recognize the representative of Sweden.

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden): I wish to take this opportunity to express my thanks to you, Mr. President, for your kind words, and to all my colleagues for their good wishes in connection with my appointment as Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. I am grateful for the trust placed in my country and my delegation and in me personally. I am very much aware of the great responsibility which this task entails, and I can assure you that I will spare no effort to live up to this responsibility.

The convention is clearly within reach, thanks to the contributions made by all delegations and by the chairmen of the Ad hoc Committee. I should like to pay tribute in particular to my predecessor, Ambassador Morel, who led the work of the Committee in a very active and skilful manner. He embodied both the letter and the spirit of the Paris Declaration and made us literally redouble our efforts. Considerable progress was made on a number of issues, and this is in large measure due to the untiring efforts by Ambassador Morel and his working group chairmen.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

I note with satisfaction the improvement of the mandate for our negotiations, as well as the increasing number of participating non-member States.

In parallel to the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, other significant events have taken place. The United Nations has once again urged us to intensify our negotiations on a chemical weapons convention with a view to its final elaboration at the earliest date. Important conferences on chemical weapons have been held in Paris and in Canberra, and a constructive bilateral negotiating process is under way between the two leading military Powers, also in the field of chemical disarmament.

The impetus thus continues to build up. We have yet not had a decisive political breakthrough, but I hope it will come in the near future. Almost all the elements of the text are on the table. It is now primarily, but not exclusively, a matter of taking the necessary political decision in order to move to the final stages of our work. It is therefore with confidence in the opportunity which we now have that I take up my duties as Chairman.

Before concluding this brief statement, I wish to express my sincere thanks for the many pledges of co-operation and support that have been made to me both today and while I have been conducting consultations with my colleagues in preparation for this task. The Committee will start as soon as possible after the adoption of the report on the inter-sessional work. According to present plans it is envisaged that the first meeting of the Ad hoc Committee will be held on Wednesday, 21 February at 3 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Sweden for his statement. Does any other member wish to take the floor? It seems not.

I should like to recall that, as I indicated at our plenary meeting on Tuesday last, I intend to put before the Conference for adoption at our next plenary meeting on Tuesday, 20 February, the report of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons contained in document CD/961. I wish also to report to you that I am actively continuing my consultations on the re-establishment of the Ad hoc Committee under agenda item 5, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", and I hope that I shall soon be in a position to announce that, thanks to the co-operation of all members, an agreement has been reached on that subject.

I have no other business for today. I now intend to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 20 February, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.